1005150668

CHRONICLE
San Francisco, Calif.
June 21, 1963

AMA Eases Into Tobacco Fight

By David Perlman
Science Correspondent

Atlantic City

The American Medical Association took its first, entative step yesterday toward an indictment of igarette smoking as a health hazard.

The organization, which speaks for 200,000 phycians in America, declared that it is duty-bound to point out the effects on the young of the use of toxic materials, including tobacco," and it urged school programs to teach the facts about smoking and disease.

This policy declaration, couched in the blandest possible terms, was hedged with qualifications and reminders that the AMA is not yet prepared to blame even lung cancer on any single agent like tobacco without further documentation.

It noted the United States Surgeon General has named a committee of eminent medical authorities to weigh all the evidence about tobacco and disease, and declared that doctors should await findings before committing themselves. The Surgeon General's committee is due to present its findings before the end of this year, but it will take at least another year before a second report offers recommendations for action.

The policy declaration approved by the AMA was a defeat for a group of physicians from various cancer clinics and heart research institutions throughout the Nation. Both the American Cancer Society and the American Heart Association have branded cigarette smoking as a causative factor in disease, and the doctors concerned had hoped the AMA was equally prepared to take a strong stand.

RESEARCH

"Extensive research is still necessary for the complete answers as to the cause and effect of many toxins, including tobacco," declared the AMA statement.

As the AMA's 112th annual convention ended yesterday, physicians at a scientific session weighed a report from a Philadelphia cardiologist on experiments showing that cigarette smoking can cause a sharp rise in the level of fats in the blood.

Fats in the bloodstream have long been indicted as the cause of atherosclerosis, the thickening of artery walls that leads to heart attacks.

Dr. Alfred Kershbaum, assistant chief of the Division of Cardiology at Philadelphia General Hospital, tested a group of volunteers by having them smoke cigarettes and measuring their blood fat levels at periodic intervals.

Some of the subjects were heart patients; some were normal and some were ill with disorders. There were 43 in all.

In every case the smoking of two filter cigarettes in ten minutes caused a "rapid, consistent and significant rise in blood fats which did not appear to be related to age, sex, smoking habits, type of cigarette or pre-smoking level of blood fats," Dr. Kershbaum said.

COMPARISONS

The heart patients showed the highest rise in fat levels, about 65 per cent; the normal subject showed a 24 per cent rise. And in the same test period a control group of subjects who had not smoked showed almost no rise at all.

Dr. Kershbaum checked the experiment in dogs, giving them nicotine intravenously. Their blood fat levels rose strikingly, indicating that nicotine in the cigarette smoke is most probably the agent involved, he said.

Next year's AMA sessions are scheduled in San Francisco.

HERALD-TRIBUNE
New York, New York
June 20, 1963

Cigarettes— AMA Stand: Wait & See

Special to the Herald Tribune

ATLANTIC CITY.

The American Medical Association side-stepped the cigarette-health question yesterday and voted to "let George do it." George, in this case, is the United States Public Health Service committee to study the relationship of tobacco and disease.

The 227-member AMA House of Delegates unanimously approved a "wait and see" resolution recommended by its Public Health and Occupational Health Committee.

A resolution submitted by the Florida delegation asked AMA to state publicly its recognition of the health hazards of smoking, and take steps to educate children against acquiring the habit. An Ohio resolution asked AMA to resume its study of the blood circulation and lung effects of smoking, but the committee-approved resolution noted that several of the researchers it would have named are already active in the USPHS study.

In its recommendations to the House, the committee said it was "in accord with . . . the intent" of the two strong resolutions, but could not recommend them now.

The House adopted a detailed trustees' report on the subject of narcotics. The report:

¶ Disapproved giving narcotics to addicts who are out patients, except in tightly controlled experimental studies.

¶ Condemned "cold turkey" withdrawal of narcotics from addicts as "inhumane."

¶ Approved administration of narcotic heroin substitutes by doctors to addicts for "ten days to two weeks" only if the addict could not be admitted to a hospital immediately.

¶ Denied that drug addicts are criminal per se, said they were emotionally disturbed.

¶ Maintained that drug addiction is a problem to be handled only under close medical supervision.

1005150668A

Source: https://www.industrydocuments.ucsf.edu/docs/qlyk0000